

Key Ideas from the Keys to Quality Accreditation Project



Key Idea **The Validation Visit Exit Interview** By Joyce Ruppell, Keys to Quality Staff

As the validator(s) sent by NAEYC completes the visit to your program, an exit interview is conducted at which time the Program Book and visit results are reviewed. Some administrators face this final part of the process with trepidation and others with relief. It helps to view it as another professional development experience for you and your program.

By the end of the visit, the validator has completed a review of your records, program, facility, and documents. The validator may also have conducted several teacher interviews to ascertain responses for items that could not be observed. During the exit interview, the validator reviews each section of the Program Book and discusses non-validated criteria with you. Some important things to remember:

1. The validator does not make the accreditation decision. This is done by a three-person NAEYC Commission that bases its decision on the Program Book, which is finalized during the exit interview.
2. The validator's job is to make sure the Program Book is accurate.
3. The exit interview is the director's opportunity to supply additional information that could be helpful to the Commission. The Commission decides if your program will be accredited (making that decision based ONLY by what is written in the Program Book by you and the validator). Take your time in responding to any non-validated items and make sure that all information is recorded in the Program Book clearly and accurately.

At the end of the Exit Interview, the director or lead teacher and the validator(s) each sign off on the Validation Process Verification Form. This form ensures that each and every task was conducted satisfactorily. Do not "sign off" on any item until it has occurred. A copy of this form is in white book *The Guide to Accreditation*. The validator will bring a copy for you both to sign.

When the Program Book review is complete, responses recorded, and the Validation Process Verification Form signed, the Program Book is sent by the validator, along with the Early Childhood Observation Forms the validator used during the observations, by registered mail to NAEYC within three days of the visit. Commissions meet monthly and hopefully you will have a decision within two to three months.

Finally, it has been said that something not evaluated has no chance to improve. Please take time to complete the Validator Evaluation following the validation visit. The NAEYC Academy relies on your feedback to protect the integrity of the system. If you feel that validation procedures were not followed properly, contact the Academy as soon as possible. Do not wait until your Commission decision is made.

For more information, contact the Keys to Quality Project by contacting RI Department of Education, Preschool Grant Coordinator, 401/222-4600 x 2408. E-mail: abcohen@lde.ri.net or CHILDSPAN at 401/729-0765, e-mail: RICCTS@intap.net.